

## CHRISTIAN MUSIC

Message by Lenny Sidell at IFCA Sectional Meeting  
Calvary Bible Church, Venice, Florida  
February 27, 1988

### Very Brief Notes

#### Dynamic Aspects of Music

##### I Samuel 16:14-23 (espec. 23)

Three effects of David's music on Saul:

He was (a) refreshed; (b) made well; (3) evil spirit departed

All great music leaves hearers refreshed

Apollo - god of medicine and music

Physical effect on the body: Heb. "ravah" refers to  
physical reaction to music

music is vibrations (or air waves) set in motion

Negative side to physical effect of music

Blood pressure can be raised measurably by

certain kinds of music - someone listening to

rock music has been measured

effect on plants tested: with heavy rock no blooms;  
plants leaned away from speaker

"Made well" - Heb. "tov" or "tovah" - either a physical  
or a mental reaction - relaxation

Music used with mental patients - therapeutic music

Spiritual effects of music - music is a spiritual  
thermometer

Spiritually - who you are inside

Weak theology draws weak music

In every culture there is rebellious music

Evil spirit left Saul - could not stay around

Music is not neutral - it communicates a

language - Ex. 32:18 - Moses knew

something was wrong by music he heard

#### Evaluating Christian Music

Gal. 1:8,9 - message - must remain pure

II Cor. 2:17 - peddling God's Word for profit

Motive must remain pure

Corrupt - make merchandize

(large churches should have Christian book store  
selling everything)

Evaluating:

1. Is the music well written?
2. Does the music match the words?
3. Are the words theologically correct?

#### Five characteristics of good music

(a) beautiful melody

melody goes up, down, and sideways

music that emphasizes just one is poorly written

i.e., heavy rock

## CHRISTIAN MUSIC - Sidell

- good music combines all three elements
  - intervals - distance between notes
  - melody is copyrighted
- (b) rich harmony - Greek "armos"
  - "harmos" - joining place
  - Eph. 4:12; Heb. 4:12 -
  - joints and marrow
  - where melody line is joined with notes underneath
  - it is called harmony
  - (7 scale steps - 1-7, repeated is 8)
  - has modulation
- (c) rhythm - without rhythm there is no music
  - John 7:38,39 "rheo" - to flow or pulsate
  - pulsation - to flow the music through
  - can syncopate rhythm
  - when pulse is erratic it is a sign of trouble
  - rhythm should carry along the melody and harmony
  - rock music puts rhythm above melody and harmony
- (d) resolution (completion)
  - all great music says something and gets out of the way
  - standing on the shore of a lake trying to
  - reach the diving platform out about 120 yards -
  - go and then return to shore
  - (deceptive cadence)
- (e) colorful interpretation - not in rock

Does the music match the words?

Music and words must say the same thing  
Music can convey a message without words  
Frank Gabelein - "The Pattern of God's Truth"

Are the words theologically correct?

Many times people learn through the music  
Positive side even stronger  
Deborah and Barak  
Is. 42:10 - when delivered from sin given new music  
Ps. 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:4-9; 149:1;  
Rev. 5:9; 14:3  
David - a godly man, skillful in music

## Consequences

What Christ are you presenting to the world?  
Is it the Christ they want to see or the one revealed  
in the Word?  
Romans 14:5 - "let each one"  
(1) each person has an individual response  
(2) fully persuaded, or convinced  
don't make a decision until you have all the facts

## CHRISTIAN MUSIC - Sidell

Job 14:4 - one interpretation - several applications  
should not use rock music for God's message  
re suicide - rock will modify body chemistry  
"       blamed for much suicide

Six characteristics of bad music - rock:

- (1) constant repetition of high pitches  
      screaming guitar - microphone - voices
- (2) no melody - just fragments
- (3) repetition of same harmony - basic
- (4) sung or played slightly under pitch (blues)
- (5) rhythm breakup for unnatural accents - offbeats
- (6) driving beat which brings out sensuous vibrations  
      rebellion against all good

Problems - capitulation - those who know better are promoting it  
Bob Larson once said: It is impossible to use rock music  
                          for God - it is dirty music.

now he is promoting it

Moody Monthly - Sept. 1985: Music is neutral.

"The Rock of This Age" - books in Christian bookstores  
that promote Christian rock

Consequences:

- (1) Actual preaching of the Word takes on a minor role  
      "Pop goes the gospel"  
      Acts 5:42 - miracles did not replace preaching -  
                  how, then, can music?

- (2) The gospel is presented in an entertaining package  
      they do not open the Bible and explain it  
      the Good News is a person: Mk. 1:1; I Cor. 9:12;  
                                  II Cor. 2:12

Webster's definition: entertainment - to hold someone's  
                          attention with pleasure

To present Jesus Christ as entertainment is impossible  
Christ: a stumbling block  
      foolishness  
      rock of offense

- (3) Widening of generation gap in the church  
      music aimed at one segment  
      at one time good music was for everybody  
      rock music aimed to divide people  
      youth programs are good, but contribute  
          to fracturing of the body of Christ  
      sacred pop says nothing to the spiritually mature  
                  nothing to the dying  
                  nothing to elderly saints  
      serious subjects do not need pop music to  
          communicate them